

January 5, 2012

To: Town Board

From: Michael Anderson

Re: Monthly Police Report for January 2012

During the month of December 2011 the La Pointe Police Department responded to the following:

- 22 Various Complaints/Incidents
  - 3 Citizen Assist Requests
  - 1 Before/After Call Out
  - 1 Reportable Traffic Accident
  - 2 Non-Reportable Traffic Accident
  - 3 Vehicle Title/Registrations
  - 3 Parking Violations
  - 3 Civil Process Served

A few months ago I mentioned losing some of our part-time officers to full time positions with other departments. I've spent quite a bit of time recently trying to recruit qualified candidates to work here on a part-time basis. This is very difficult in the field of law enforcement due to the dedication each recruit puts into their education and training. They all want full time positions but we just don't have any openings at this time. If we are lucky enough to find qualified people to work here during their journey to find full time employment, we need to jump at the chance to hire them. I have found two people who appear to be very good applicants for the position. We can never have too many part-time people on our roster and the cost of hiring them are limited to uniforms, some equipment and ferry passage unless they can find affordable housing on the island. Once I complete all the Training and Standards requirements, background checks, etc. and unless I find problems with their applications, I will be recommending they be hired. After that, they still need to go through some mandated testing. If they successfully pass the required tests then we will enter into a job offer and go from there. I'm letting you know this now because anytime a law enforcement administrator finds a qualified person every other department in the area also tries to hire them so I don't want any interruptions once they are cleared for work.

In last months report I updated you on our equipment grant process. The first phase was completed and I have now completed the second phase. I will be gone for training the week of January 9 - 13 and will be dropping off the squad at DSC Communication for the new video recording system at that time. Once we have the equipment installed, pay the invoice, I will submit it to the Department of Traffic Safety for reimbursement. This particular type of equipment has been pre approved and the final phase of the paperwork should be completed sometime in March/April and we will received our payment after that.

In talking with some Town Board members and other town employees it has become evident that there is confusion as to what the police can enforce and what they can't. Anyone can read through the Wisconsin Statutes and say they want a law enforced without knowing what is required by the courts. The police know what's expected of them by the courts so even though someone thinks there is a law prohibiting someone from doing something it may not be enforceable if proper measures weren't taken in the first place. If a crime is committed, the Town of La Pointe has nothing to do with carrying out prosecution, it is done by the State. The Town has a right to ordain their own laws by adopting a State Statute and passing/publishing an ordinance. All language in the ordinance must be able to hold up if challenged in court otherwise the ordinance is not enforceable and a lot of time and money is wasted. I realize it is not easy for people who don't deal with this everyday to understand the process so I've attached copies of a couple different types of citations that we issue. Every field must be filled out and I'd like you to make note of the sections I've circled, Plaintiff, Ordinance No. and Statute No. One of the biggest problems the police face is when we can't enter anything into these required fields because the initial steps were never taken or were incorrectly taken by the Town. This makes it impossible to cite or charge someone with an alleged violation regardless of what the complainant may think. This is why I've preached over the years about not being in a hurry when trying to draft an ordinance. History shows that the successful way to enforce laws is by thinking issues through and doing it right the first time. Like I said, there seems to be some real confusion with many people on the island so I hope this is of some assistance and helps some of you understand this small part of the legal process. I'd be happy to discuss it further if need be.

Sincerely,

Michael Anderson  
Police Chief